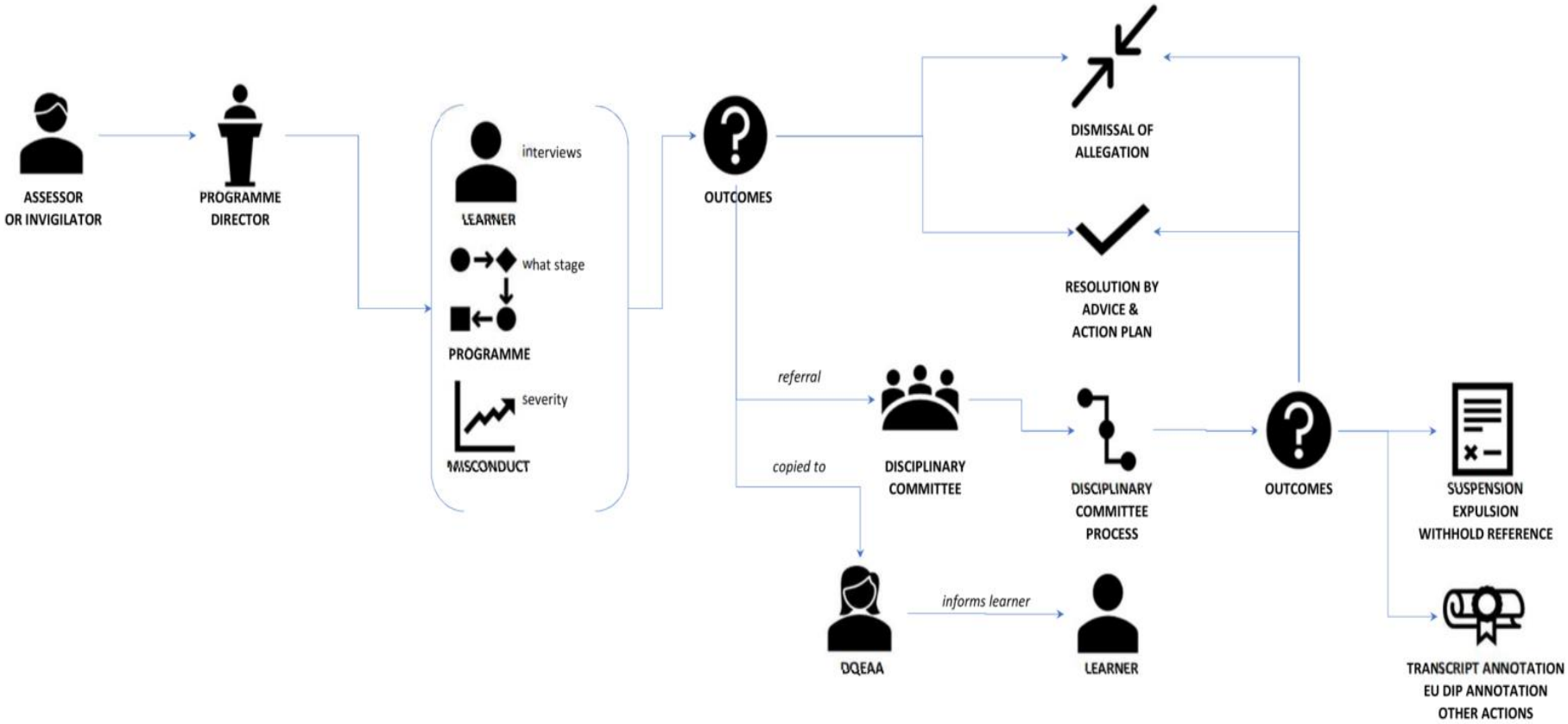
#	POLICY TITLE	POLICY AREA:	VERSION:	DATE ADOPTED :
ST NICHOLAS MONTESSORI	**7.8 ACADEMIC INTEGRITY**	7) SUPPORT FOR LEARNERS	4.O	AUGUST 2020



Introduction:-

It is commonly accepted that all members of the academic community, teachers and learners, use and build on the work of others. However, it is also commonly accepted that we build on the work of others in an open and explicit manner, and with due acknowledgement. The upholding of academic integrity is of paramount importance.

The purpose of this document is to:-

- define Academic Integrity;
- establish guidelines for academic good practice;
- identify what constitutes academic impropriety;
- establish parameters for the detection and investigation of instances of academic impropriety;
- outline procedures with proportionate consequences for those found to have engaged in academic impropriety.

Legal and Regulatory Context:-

This policy is designed with reference to:-

- QQI Core Statutory QA Guidelines;
- Qualifications and Quality Assurance (Education and Training) (Amendment) Act 2019 (enacted July 2020);
- Green Paper on Assessment (2018);
- The on-going work of the International Centre for Academic Integrity (ICAI).
- The on-going work of the National Academic Integrity Network (NAIN).

Scope:-

- This policy applies to all learners at SNMCI and to any individual acting in an academic capacity on behalf of the College.
- The Director of Quality and Academic Affairs (DQAA) is responsible for the review and implementation of this policy on behalf of the Academic Board.
- All academic staff members are responsible for upholding this policy and its accompanying procedures.

Definitions:

SNMCI uses the following definitions of Academic Integrity as per the International Centre for Academic Integrity **(ICAI, 2013) i.e.**

Academic Integrity is

- '*a commitment, even in the face of adversity to five fundamental values: honour, trust, fairness, respect and responsibility*'.

SNMCI Considers that Academic Integrity is

- something to be achieved through good practice rather than 'misconduct' to be avoided;
- goes beyond understanding and avoiding plagiarism, although this is a key part of it.
- involves the learner demonstrating knowledge and understanding through a process of evaluation and research, expressing

understanding and original ideas independently, honestly and in an appropriate academic style, using good referencing and acknowledging all sources;

Breaches of Academic Integrity:

Plagiarism:

- Plagiarism: attempting to pass off others' effort, intellectual property, or any other work as their own by copying without consent or failing to use academic referencing conventions (deliberately or otherwise);
- Unclear referencing: taking parts of the work from a source or sources and using them without acknowledgement in a submitted assignment. SNMCI is aware that this type of plagiarism often arises because learners are unsure how and when to reference material;
- Inadequate paraphrasing: when a learner closely follows a source and partially changes words and phrases;
- Copying another's work;
- Cutting and pasting from the web – even if it is referenced;
- Previously submitted work: submitting a piece of work that has previously been submitted in another module, in another course of study, or for assessment in another college, (self-plagiarism).

Plagiarism, whether deliberate or inadvertent, is considered to be academically fraudulent and a serious offence against College discipline

Collusion:

- Collusion: aiding, attempting to aid, obtaining aid from or attempting to obtain aid from another learner, or any other person, to contribute to an assessment task except where required for group assessment tasks;
- Having another person write all or part of an assignment.

Fraud:

- Fabrication of data: making up results and recording or reporting them;
- Falsification of data: manipulating research, materials, equipment, or processes or changing or omitting data or results such that the research is not accurately represented in the research record;
- Conducting research without ethical approval.

Impersonation:

- Impersonation is the assumption of another person's identity with the intention of gaining unfair advantage during examinations or any other form of assessment;
- It also refers to a person who knowingly and willingly allows his or her identity to be assumed with the intention of gaining an unfair advantage for the person impersonated.

Cheating:

- Cheating is the offence of gaining or seeking to gain an unfair or fraudulent advantage in assessment, where the conduct is of such

seriousness as to be regarded as a major infringement of academic good practice.

Policy Statement:-

- In line with College philosophy and values, SNMCI, will, in the first instance, move from framing 'academic integrity issues' as 'misconduct and dishonesty' to a more supportive and educative approach, aimed at the encouragement of good academic practice and learner success;
- The College will clearly outline its own responsibilities with regard to Academic Integrity and also outline learner responsibilities as part of a joint effort to maintain academic standards and to avoid unfair academic advantage or disadvantage for any member of the SNMCI academic community.

College responsibilities:-

- Programme development will include consideration of reducing opportunities for academic impropriety and increasing learner motivation and development of lifelong ethical practices;
- All programmes will include modules/workshops on good academic practice, academic writing and referencing;
- Modules and workshops delivered in Stage One will be reinforced at subsequent stages;
- A '*Briefing for Students on Academic Integrity and Plagiarism'* will be placed in the Learner Handbook with a link to the full QA 7.8 Academic Integrity Policy document;
- Guidelines will be provided on good academic practice in the College Referencing Handbook.
- Guidelines and an *Academic Integrity Faculty Checklist* will be made available to programme staff through induction, CPD, programme committee meetings and in the Lecturer Handbooks;
- Work submitted for assessment may be subject to electronic or other detection methods;
- Incidents of infringement of academic integrity policy will be dealt with in fair and transparent ways, to maintain the integrity of academic programmes and to avoid unfair academic advantage or disadvantage for any member of the SNMCI academic community.
- Programme Directors will assess patterns of incidents related to academic integrity as part of the annual programme review and, with the DQAA, review the college's **Policy on Academic Integrity** to ensure that the policy and attached procedures remain appropriate and adequate to their task;

Learner responsibilities: -

- Learners have a responsibility to make themselves aware of College policy;
- Learners are responsible for following all guidance related to good practice and academic integrity as given by academic staff;
- Learners should demonstrate initiative and be proactive about investigating good academic practice and about learning how to express

themselves clearly without resorting to replicating other's words, while citing, and referencing as per guidelines.

- Learners will sign and abide by the academic integrity pledge/declaration attached to assignments that the material in question is wholly their own work except where indicated by referencing or acknowledgement;
- Learners will sign and abide by the academic integrity pledge/declaration attached to online assessments (e.g. MCQ/Presentations) that the material in question is wholly their own work (or the joint work of the named participants in the case of a group project) except where indicated by referencing or acknowledgement;
- Learners will sign and abide by the academic integrity pledge/declaration attached to summative exams (online or in person) that they will complete the exam in a fair, honest and trustworthy manner, adhering to the instructions issued;

Principles dealing with instances of academic impropriety:-

- First instances of infringement of academic integrity will be viewed as arising from **negligence rather than deliberate intent** and learners will be offered extra support and instruction on acceptable academic practice. **Note:** first instances in Award Year may have further consequences.
- Each instance will be considered in light of (a), the extent of the plagiarism suspected and (b), what stage the learner has reached in his/her course of study; **Note:** first instances in Award Year may have further consequences.
- Repeated offences: Each incidence is counted over the entire duration of a learner's programme. If a learner offends a second time, the incident is deemed to be more serious;
- Cases of major plagiarism, plagiarism in postgraduate or award year, or cases of repeated plagiarism will be referred to the Disciplinary Committee;

Distinctions between Minor, Major and Gross Infringements:

Minor Infringement:

- Minor infringements refer to plagiarism, collusion and unfair advantage arising from **negligence** rather than deliberate intent.
- There are two instances of minor infringements recognised in this policy, those which occur for the first time and those which occur for the second time in the knowledge of the first infringement.
- A third or further minor academic infringement in the knowledge of the second infringement is deemed to be a major infringement.

Major Infringement:

- Major infringement refers to flagrant cases of plagiarism and collusion (even those occurring for the first time) and all cases of misrepresentation, fraud, impersonation and cheating.
- There are three instances of major infringement recognised in this policy, those which occur for the first time, those which occur for

the second time in the knowledge of the first infringement and those which occur for the third time in the knowledge of the second infringement.

Gross Infringement:

- Gross infringement refers to particular instances for which the only penalty is immediate expulsion.
- Current instances of such an infringement are :-
- Impersonation at a written exam
- Submission of a project/dissertation where a major part of the work is taken directly from another source;
- Instances can only be added to or deleted from this Schedule by the Academic Board.

Staff Involved:

Lecturers; Programme Directors; Deputy Programme Directors; Examinations Office; Invigilators; DQAA.

Procedure Outline	**Person/s responsible**	**Records generated to ensure evidence of follow through**
- When an assessor suspects that a learner has engaged in plagiarism the matter is referred to the Programme Director; - The Programme Director will speak to the learner concerned; - The learner will have the opportunity to offer an explanation, oral or written, of his /her actions and has the right to be accompanied by a witness/advocate of his/her choice; - The Programme Director will discuss with the learner an appropriate course of action in light of (a) whether this is a first instance (b) the extent of the infringement (c) what stage the student has reached in his/her course of study. Action may include: a) Dismissal of the allegation b) Resolution of the incident internally through: 1. Advice on acceptable academic referencing and writing and a resubmission of the assignment without any penalty. Agreed Action plan to work towards specific targets in relation to academic integrity; 2. Advice on acceptable academic referencing and writing and a resubmission of the assignment for a reduced maximum mark. Agreed Action plan to work towards specific targets in relation to academic	**Learner** **Programme Director** **PD** **PD**	**Piece of assessment** **Minutes of meeting** **Turnitin Report if available** **Documented Incident**

integrity; 3. Advice on acceptable academic referencing and writing and a submission of a new written assignment in the same area for a reduced maximum mark. Agreed Action plan to work towards specific targets in relation to academic integrity; (c) Referral of the matter for review by The Disciplinary Committee (d) Repeated offences will automatically be referred to The Disciplinary Committee - The Programme Director will document the incident and proposed course of action - Any incident of alleged plagiarism reported to The Disciplinary Committee should be copied to the Director of Quality and Academic Affairs and include a short statement outlining, (a) grounds of suspicion (b) the piece of work under consideration and (c) any other supporting evidence. - A student appearing before the Disciplinary Committee retains the right to be accompanied by a witness/advocate of his/her choice; - In all cases of referral to The Disciplinary Committee the student should be informed by the Director of Quality and Academic Affairs that their work is under scrutiny by the committee as an alleged case of plagiarism. The right of the student to due process and appeal is at all times fully recognised. The procedure of any disciplinary action will be carried out with dignity and respect for the student and for all concerned. The decision of the Disciplinary Committee will be made known to the student and the Head of Examinations and Registrations. **See QA 7.9:TOR: Disciplinary Committee** Disciplinary action imposed by the Disciplinary Committee may include:- - Reduction in the mark (including a mark of 0) for the work affected; - Re-examination of student's written assignments in the current module; - Re-examination of student's written work in current full year/stage; - Requirement to submit a new written assignment in the same subject - area, for a reduced maximum mark; - Requirement to complete assignment in a controlled setting e.g. Written examination;	**PD** **Disciplinary Committee** **DQAA** **Chair of Disciplinary Committee**	**Agreed plan** **PD Report** **Correspondence** **Report of Disciplinary Committee Correspondence**

- Requirement to repeat module; - Requirement to repeat full year/stage; - Requirement to leave the College.		

Policy Control Sheet

Policy	**7.8: Academic Integrity**
Version	4.0
Adopted/Effective	August 2020
Supersedes	3.0
Monitoring/ Next Review Date	Every Year/August 2021
Responsible Officer(s) Designated Reviewer(s)	Director of Quality and Academic Affairs (DQAA); PD's
Scope	All Programmes

References

SNMCI Policy area	**7) Support For Learners**
Developed with reference to	Quality and Qualifications Ireland (2016), *Core Statutory Quality Assurance (QA) Guidelines*, Sections 1.1; 4.3; 5.3. Irish Universities Association (2014), Ensuring Research Integrity in Ireland. The European Code of Conduct for Research Integrity International Centre for Academic Integrity (ICAI). National Academic Integrity Network (NAIN).
Related SNMCI Policies / Forms	'*Briefing for Students on Academic Integrity and Plagiarism'* *'Academic Integrity Faculty Checklist'* Learner Handbook; Lecturer Handbook; Referencing Handbook; Student Charter; QA 7.9: TOR Disciplinary Committee;

Revision

Revision Number	Revision Description	Originator	Approved By
3.0	General revision	Office of Quality and Academic Affairs	